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Message Text

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ACTION OES-07

INFO OCT-01 ARA-10 ISO-00 COME-00 EB-08 AID-05 IGA-02
L-03 SP-02 CIAE-00 INR-07 NSAE-00 TRSE-00 HEW-04
IO-13 /062 W
----------031419 091617Z /41
R 091548Z SEP 77
FM AMEMBASSY MEXICO
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4859

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EO 11652: N/A
TAGS:SPOP
SUBJECT: REQUEST FOR POPULATION INFORMATION

REF: (A) STATE 167895
(B) MEXICO AIRGRAM A-39 (FEB. 25, 1976)
(C) MEXICO 11164
(D) MEXICO 14726

1. REGRET DELAY IN ANSWERING REF A. MUCH OF REQUESTED INFORMATION HAS BEEN PROVIDED IN REFS. C AND D AND BY POPOFF IN DISCUSSIONS WITH OES DURING JULY TDY IN WASHINGTON.

2. AN ACCURATE ESTIMATE OF MEXICO'S POPULATION IS PRESENTLY LACKING. PRESENT POPULATION PROJECTIONS, BASED ON THE 1970 CENSUS, ARE QUESTIONABLE BECAUSE OF LACK OF AGREEMENT ON THE POPULATION GROWTH RATE. THE GOM ESTIMATES THAT MEXICO'S 1976 POPULATION WAS 62,329.189. ESTIMATES OF THE POPULATION GROWTH RATE RANGE FROM 3.6 DOWN TO 3.2. A RECENT COLEGIO DE MEXICO STUDY INDICATED THE GROWTH RATE TO BE 3.2 BUT THERE IS WIDESPREAD LACK OF CONFIDENCE WITHIN THE GOM ON THE ACCURACY OF THIS FIGURE DUE TO FACT THAT BASELINE YEAR WAS A PERIOD OF INTENSIVE EFFORTS TO REGISTER
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BIRTHS OF CHILDREN SUDDENLY LEGITIMIZED UNDER PREVIOUS GOVERNMENT'S RESPONSIBLE PARENTHOOD PROGRAM. THE RESULT WAS THAT ENORMOUS INCREASE IN BIRTHS WAS SHOWN, (SINCE REGISTRATION WAS BY YEAR OF REGISTRATION AND NOT OF ACTUAL BIRTH) AND ANY SUBSEQUENT MEASURES INDICATED A SUBSTANTIAL DECREASE IN BIRTHS. A 3.4 POPULATION GROWTH RATE IS PROBABLY A GOOD MEASURE FOR THE PRESENT. NONETHELESS, THE

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GOM ESTIMATES THE 1975 BIRTH RATE TO BE 41.7 PER THOUSAND WITH A DEATH RATE OF 7.6 PER THOUSAND. NO ESTIMATES ARE YET AVAILABLE FOR 1976 BIRTH AND DEATH RATES. POPULATION ESTIMATES OF PRINCIPAL METROPOLITAN AREAS ARE:

MEXICO CITY - 11.5 MILLION
GUADALAJARA - 1.9 MILLION
MONTERREY - 1.6 MILLION
GOM ESTIMATES 41.9 OF THE TOTAL POPULATION IS URBAN (DISPERSED IN 32 CITIES OF 150,000 OR MORE POPULATION AND INNUMERABLE SMALLER CITIES), AND 58.1 RURAL (DISPERSED IN 97,000 COMMUNITIES OF 2,500 OR LESS AND ON 24,000 EJIDOS). IN 1973 THE SECRETARIAT OF THE PRESIDENCY ESTIMATED MEXICO HAD 4 MILLION RURAL FAMILIES OF AN AVERAGE SIZE OF 6 PEOPLE, OF WHICH 50 HAD A YEARLY PER CAPITA INCOME OF BETWEEN $75 AND $150. 1977 PROJECTIONS OF INCOME BY CITY MADE BY SECRETARIAT OF INDUSTRY INDICATED THAT 8 OF MEXICO CITY POPULATION HAD AN INCOME GREATER THAN $350. PER MONTH, WHILE 55 HAD MONTHLY INCOME OF LESS THAN $150. TYPICAL OTHER MEXICAN CITY PERCENTAGE OF POPULATION AT LOWEST INCOME LEVEL RANGES FROM 60 TO 70 OF CITY POPULATION. OTHER COMPARISONS TO BE POUCHED SEPARATELY TO POP/LA. THEREFORE, WHILE IT MAY APPEAR TO SOME THAT MEXICO IS URBAN, IN EFFECT THE LARGE IN-MIGRATION TO THE CITIES BY THE RURAL POPULACE CREATES A MAJOR ADVERSE IMPACT ON THE QUALITY OF LIFE DUE TO NEED TO PROVIDE
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SERVICES TO THE POOR RESIDING IN THE MANY MISERY FRINGES OF THESE "URBAN" ZONES.

MEXICO HAS 1 DOCTOR FOR EACH 36 SQ. KMS., AND 1.6 HOSPITAL BEDS PER THOUSAND INHABITANTS. IN 1975 THERE WERE 13,000,000 WOMEN IN THE FERTILE AGE. BY 1976 THERE WERE 14,000,000 WOMEN IN THE FERTILE AGE. IN 1975 THERE WERE 2,270,000 BIRTHS AND 49.4 DEATHS PER 1,000 LIVE BIRTHS. MATERNAL MORTALITY IN 1975 WAS 1.0.

3. REFS. C AND D INDICATE THE MEXICAN GOVERNMENT NATIONAL FAMILY PLANNING PLAN WHICH IS A COMPREHENSIVE AND DETAILED PLAN FOR PUBLIC AND PRIVATE SECTOR PROGRAMS TO ACHIEVE A DEMOGRAPHIC GOAL OF REDUCING THE POPULATION GROWTH RATE BY 1982 TO 2.5. COSTING US$250 MILLION FOR FIVE YEAR PERIOD ENDING 1982, THE PLAN HAS THREE MAIN CONES OF ACTION TO BE CARRIED OUT BY MULTIPLE PUBLIC AND PRIVATE SECTOR ORGANIZATIONS: URBAN, RURAL AND SUPPORTIVE. IMPROVEMENT OF CLINICAL SERVICES, INCLUDING PROVISION OF VOLUNTARY SURGICAL CONTRACEPTION THROUGHOUT SYSTEM, COMMUNITY BASED DISTRIBUTION OF CONTRACEPTIVES USING A VARIETY OF ORGANIZATIONAL INFRASTRUCTURE, COMMERCIAL SALE

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AT MODEST PRICES OF CONTRACEPTIVES THROUGH FOOD OUTLETS
AND MACHINES, INFUSION OF ALL EDUCATIONAL MATERIALS FROM
PRIMARY THROUGH UNIVERSITY WITH FAMILY PLANNING, BIO-
MEDICAL RESEARCH, AND SOCIAL RESEARCH TO MAKE PROGRAMS
MORE EFFECTIVE WILL HIGHLIGHT THE NEW PLAN.
THE GOM PLAN IS FAR REACHING AND INNOVATIVE. AS A LATE
COMER TO FAMILY PLANNING, THE GOM HAS LEARNED BY OTHERS
MISTAKES AND SUCCESSES. THE GOM OFFICIALS RESPONSIBLE FOR
FAMILY PLANNING ARE ALL TRIED EXPERTS IN THE FIELD OF
FAMILY PLANNING AND ARE DEMONSTRATING THEIR ABILITY AS
PLANNERS, IMPLEMENTERS AND ADMINISTRATORS IN A GARGANTUAN

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ACTION OES-07

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IGA-02 SP-02 CIAE-00 INR-07 NSAE-00 TRSE-00 HEW-04
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EFFORT WHICH THEY CLAIM IS RECEIVING THE HIGHEST GOM
NATIONAL PRIORITY. RECENTLY WHEN ADDITIONAL STUDIES AND
TASK FORCES WERE SUGGESTED TO THEM BY AN INTERNATIONAL
ORGANIZATION, THE GOM RESPONSE WAS DECISIVE: NOT ONLY IS
THERE A NATIONAL POLICY DECISION TO MOVE FORWARD RAPIDLY
AND EFFECTIVELY ON ALL FRONTS WITH FAMILY PLANNING TO
ACHIEVE ITS DEMOGRAPHIC GOAL BY 1982, BUT ALSO ANY ACTION
WHICH DOES NOT CONTRIBUTE TO THAT EFFORT IS A LUXURY THAT
CANNOT NOW BE AFFORDED. GOM ENTHUSIASM AND SOUNDNESS OF
APPROACH IS A UNIQUE SITUATION THAT REPRESENTS A SUBSTAN-
TIAL DEPARTURE FROM THE RHETORIC YET LITTLE ACTION THAT
EXISTED IN THE PREVIOUS MEXICAN ADMINISTRATION.

FOR EXAMPLE, THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH (MOH)-MATERNAL CHILD
HEALTH (MCH) PROGRAM IN PREVIOUS ADMINISTRATION WAS 80
MCH AND 20 FP. MOH PROUDLY STATES THE REVERSE IS NOW
TRUE. THE MOH BELIEVES FP IS MAJOR HEALTH ACTION WHICH CAN
BE SUPPLEMENTED BY OTHER BASIC HEALTH ACTIONS IN MCH AND

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SANITATION.

THE AMBITIOUS YET WE BELIEVE REALISTIC GOM PROGRAM'S LARGE PRICE TAG IS DUE TO SIZE OF COUNTRY, DIVERSITY, AND SHEER ENORMITY OF TASK. WHILE SUBSTANTIAL GOM RESOURCES SHOULD
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BE FORTHCOMING, ADDITIONAL SOURCES ARE NEEDED AND BEING SOUGHT IN ORDER TO ACHIEVE THE TOTAL $50 MILLION A YEAR PROGRAM COST ANTICIPATED TO ACHIEVE GOM GOALS AND OBJECTIVES. SCOPE AND SIZE OF PREVIOUS INDIRECT US ASSISTANCE HAS BEEN SMALL. GOM NEEDS ADDITIONAL RESOURCES FOR ITS FP PROGRAM AND PRESIDENT LOPEZ PORTILLO STATED TO SALAS AT UN THAT HE SOUGHT ASSISTANCE FROM BOTH MULTILATERAL AND BILATERAL SOURCES.

IT IS APPROPRIATE AND DESIRABLE THAT US FUNDS BE CHANNELED TO THE GOM FOR ACHIEVING THE NATIONAL DEMOGRAPHIC GOALS. AN EXCELLENT FUNDING MECHANISM EXISTS WHERE INDIRECT ASSISTANCE TO NATIONAL PROGRAMS IS POSSIBLE AND LESS LIKELY TO CAUSE PROBLEMS OF DIRECT US INVOLVEMENT IN A SENSITIVE AREA. REF CABLES INDICATE PROGRAM NEEDS.
4. NON-POPULATION PROGRAMS AFFECTING POPULATION GROWTH HAVE BEEN COMMENTED ON IN REF B.

5. FOOD AND POPULATION: PRESENT ESTIMATES ARE THAT 75 TO 80 OF ALL ARABLE LAND IS UNDER CULTIVATION. WITHIN NEXT TEN YEARS ANOTHER 5 MILLION HECTARES OF LAND COULD BE BROUGHT UNDER CULTIVATION BUT AT VERY HIGH COST. UP TO ONE FOURTH OF PRESENTLY IRRIGATED LAND COULD BE LOST TO PRODUCTION BECAUSE OF SALINIZATION IF PREVENTIVE MEASURES ARE NOT TAKEN. AS A RESULT, REQUIREMENTS FOR FOOD IMPORTS WILL INCREASE. BY 1985 IT IS ESTIMATED THAT 15 OF CORN NEEDS AND 60 TO 70 OF SOY NEEDS AND ONE MILLION TONS OF WHEAT WILL HAVE TO BE IMPORTED. IF PRESENT POTENTIAL FOR INCOME FROM PETROLEUM RESOURCES IS FORTHCOMING, THERE WILL BE FUNDS FOR THESE FOOD IMPORTS.

6. OTHER INFORMATION PRESENTED IN REF B IS STILL VALID.
THOMPSON
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